



Department of Justice

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ATTORNEY GENERAL GONZALES ANNOUNCES ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICE OF JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF OVERSEAS TERRORISM

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales today announced the establishment of an Office of Justice for Victims of Overseas Terrorism to ensure that the investigation and prosecution of terrorist attacks against American citizens abroad remain a high priority of the Department of Justice.

The office will be established within the Office of the Assistant Attorney General of the Criminal Division of the Department of Justice. The Assistant Attorney General will appoint a senior official to serve as Director of the office, and the FBI, along with the Criminal Division's Counterterrorism Section, the Office of International Affairs and the Office of Enforcement Operations, will designate liaisons to the new office.

The office will be responsible for: monitoring the investigation and prosecution of terrorist attacks against Americans abroad; working with the Criminal Division's Victim-Witness Coordinator, the FBI, U.S. Attorneys' Offices and other departmental components to ensure that the rights of victims and their families are honored and respected; establishing a Joint Task Force with the Department of State; compiling pertinent data and statistics; responding to congressional and citizen inquiries on the Department's response to terrorist attacks on Americans overseas; and filing any necessary reports with Congress.

"This new office guarantees a voice for victims and their families in the investigation and prosecution of terrorists who prey on Americans overseas," said Attorney General Gonzales. "Our commitment to these victims is as strong as our dedication to bringing their terrorist attackers to justice."

The joint task force to be established with the Department of State was outlined in the 2005 Omnibus Appropriations Act approved by Congress. The task force, consisting of Justice Department and State Department personnel, will be activated in the event of a terrorist incident against American citizens overseas.

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